



U.S. Department of
Transportation
Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

ORIGINAL

GENERAL COUNSEL

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

June 1, 2001

Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary, Federal Communications Commission
The Portals
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: CC Docket No. 92-105
Ex Parte Meeting

RECEIVED

JUN 1 2001

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Ms. Salas:

Yesterday the undersigned, together with William S. Jones (the Technical Director of the Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office within the Federal Highway Administration) and representatives of ITS America, met with Diane Griffin Harmon, Cheryl Callahan, and Louise Klees-Wallace of the Common Carrier Bureau concerning the above-referenced proceeding.

The subject of discussion was the progress to date on implementing the use of 511 to access travel-related information and the outlook for further progress. This encompassed the development of informational and other guidelines, the involvement of public and private sector parties, and the continued need for coordination and flexibility. Several documents were made available to the Common Carrier Bureau staff in the course of the meeting, copies of which are enclosed herewith.

Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(b)(2), this letter and one copy thereof are submitted for inclusion in the record in the above-referenced proceeding. Counsel for ITS America will be submitting a similar letter. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Paul Samuel Smith
Senior Trial Attorney
(202) 366-9285

Enclosures

cc: Diane Griffin Harmon (w/o enclosures)

No. of Copies rec'd 011
List A B C D E

511 STATUS and ISSUES

5-25-01

William S. Jones

Technical Director

ITS Joint Program Office

US Dept. of Transportation

ORIGINAL

511 Status

- \$5 M Grant Program (\$100,000/State)
 - Planning and Conversion
- 5 Early Adopters
 - US DOT Evaluating Their Progress for
Lessons Learned
- Providing Technical Assistance
- 17 States Actively Pursuing 511 (Az, Mn, Cal, Ky, Utah, Wash, Fla, RI, Ill, Neb, Mich, NY, NJ, Penn, Del, Va, Ohio)

EARLY ADOPTER STATUS

- Ky - 511 Operational Apr 2, 01 (Cin Metro)
- San Francisco Bay Area + Caltrans
 - Operational Fall 01
- Arizona - Statewide + Phoenix & Tucson
 - Initial Operation Jul/Aug 01
- Utah - Salt Lake City
- Minnesota - Statewide - Operational Fall 01

511 Deployment Coalition

- Formed Oct 2000 -
- AASHTO Leads - APTA & ITS America
 - US DOT Funding
- Policy Committee
 - 34 Agencies - Co.s (incl. USTA & CTIA)
- Working Group
 - 44 Agencies - Co.s

511 GUIDELINES

- Content & Quality
 - Minimum Capability to Justify 511
- National Consistency
 - Time stamp, Structure, link to 911
- Cost - Free to Public
 - Public Agency Funded

511 ISSUES

- Assignment of 511 to Government Stifles Competition
- Assignment Conflicts Between Public Agencies
- Difficulties in Routing the Call

511 ASSIGNMENT TO GOV'T

- FCC Correct Assigning 511 to Gov't
- N11 to Serve Public Interest
- Transportation Agencies view Traveler Information Differently than Carriers

Travel Services

- Flight Info
- *Ground Transportation*
- *Directions*
- *Things 2 Do*
- iQRadio
- Zagat Restaurants
- Weather
- CityConnect
- Movies
- Vicinity
- CitySearch
- Reservations
- Airlines
- Hotels
- Car Rental

Travel Services:

Ground Transportation

- iQTaxi
 - Create profile
 - Book a taxi
 - Book a sedan
 - Book a limo
 - Help

Travel Services:

Directions

- 
- Mapquest
 - Traffic Station
 - Yellow Pages

January 25, 2001

Northeast 511 Workshop

Directions: Map Quest

- *Directions*
- Biz Locator
- *Traffic*

Map Quest:

Directions: Traffic

- For Which City
 - ABC
 - DEF ...
- Washington, DC
 - Accidents (0)
 - Construction (12)
 - Delays (0)
 - *Other* (2)

Transportation View of Traveler Information

- **Traffic Conditions**
 - Real Time
 - Specific Routes
 - Travel Time
 - Road Weather Conditions
- **Public Transit**
 - Schedules
 - Trip Planning
- **For Emergency Call 911**

It's a Matter of Priorities

- 511 means Road/Travel conditions
 - 1st on menu
 - Minimum level of Content
 - Minimum Level of Quality
 - Timeliness - granularity
- Transportation Agencies Can Ensure This
 - Coalition Guidelines Available this Fall

Private Sector Role

- Gov't Provides Raw Data
- Gov't or Private Content Providers
Aggregate Data
- Carriers & Other Private Co.s Provide
Service to the Public Using Approved Info
- Can Add Any Other Travel Services Their
Customers Want or Competition Demands

Conflicts in Assignment

- Transportation Industry Accepts Responsibility for Coordination
- US DOT Changed Grant Program
 - \$100,000 Grants to States
 - Develops Statewide (Multi-state) Plan
 - Presents One Face to Carriers
- However - Doesn't Guarantee Success

AASHTO
APTA ITSA
US DOT

DOCKET FILE COPY DUPLICATE

511 DEPLOYMENT COALITION

POLICY COMMITTEE

RETREAT SUMMARY

MARCH 29-30, 2001

Background

On March 8, 1999, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) petitioned the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to designate a nationwide three-digit telephone number for traveler information. This petition was formally supported by 17 State DOTs, 32 transit operators, and 23 Metropolitan Planning Organizations and local agencies. On July 21, 2000, the FCC designated 511 as the national traveler information number.

The FCC ruling leaves nearly all implementation issues and schedules to state and local agencies and telecommunications carriers. There are no Federal requirements and no mandated way to pay for 511; however, given the national scope of the designation and the scarcity of N11 codes, USDOT and FCC expect to see some type of nationwide deployment. In 2005, the FCC will review progress in implementing 511.

While the flexibility provided in the FCC ruling is highly desirable, it also presents a challenge. There is a great deal of interest in using 511 throughout the U.S. It is expected that there will be multiple requests for 511, at least in some parts of the U.S., from DOTs, transit agencies, regional and local transportation agencies, as well as private service providers who will offer to implement 511 services for some sort of compensation. If not thoughtfully planned, 511 services could devolve into an inconsistent set of services widely varying in type, quality and cost.

511 Deployment Coalition

Mindful of both the opportunities and challenges 511 presents, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), in conjunction with many other organizations including the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and the Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITS America), with support from the USDOT, has established a 511 Deployment Coalition. The program kicked off in January 2001.

A Policy Committee of leading executives from all elements of the transportation and telecommunications sectors has been formed to guide the 511 Coalition. The goal of the 511 Coalition is **“the timely establishment of a national 511 traveler information service that is sustainable and provides value to users.”** The intent is to implement 511 nationally using a bottom up approach facilitated by information sharing and a cooperative dialogue through the national associations represented on the Policy Committee. The mission of the Policy Committee is to provide guidance on how to achieve this goal. The Chairman of the Policy Committee is Elwyn Tinklenberg, the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The Vice Chairmen are Greg Cook, Executive Director of the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority; and, Lawrence Yermack, President of PB Farradyne. The Chair was selected by AASHTO and Vice Chairs were selected by APTA and ITS America. Jim Wright of the Minnesota DOT has been temporarily assigned to AASHTO to serve as the staff director of the 511 Deployment Coordination Program.

Preparation and Retreat Process

It was determined that the most efficient method of initiating the work of the Coalition was to conduct a policy retreat. The 511 Policy Committee Retreat occurred March 29-30, 2001 in Palm Harbor, Florida. As is necessary for any successful retreat, advanced preparation along with a structured, focused agenda and process were the foundations for the Retreat. As will be documented, since January 2001, several meetings and support work occurred to plan, prepare for and conduct the Retreat.

Preparation

To prepare information on the key issues facing the Coalition, a Working Group of practitioners was formed to support the Policy Committee. The Working Group met twice in January for three full days and, based on these meetings and the content of the FCC ruling, identified three major issues that needed to be addressed:

- ***Content*** – Should there be some minimal level of content and quality of that content?
- ***Consistency*** – To what extent should there be some level of consistency among 511 services throughout the U.S.?
- ***Cost*** – Should 511 be free to the end user? If so, how should 511 be financed?

These issues became the cornerstones of the 511 Policy Committee Retreat. The Working Group developed short papers on each of these issues to provide some background and analysis, and make some recommendations to provoke discussion within the Policy Committee.

March 1, 2001 Policy Committee Meeting

An initial meeting of the Policy Committee was conducted on March 1, 2001 in Washington, D.C. to better orient the Policy Committee and establish a rapport among Policy Committee members prior to the Retreat. Key presentations were made on the FCC ruling on 511 and on the history of 911. In addition, a panel was conducted of telephone system operators, enabling the Policy Committee to hear firsthand how metropolitan systems, statewide systems, transit-oriented systems and wireless carrier services are provided.

Of note during the meeting was the request of the President of the National Emergency Numbers Association (NENA), the coordinating organization for 911 service providers, that there: (1) be a linkage between 511 and 911 and (2) that 511 services get deployed in a fashion that does not confuse citizens in their distinction of 511 and 911.

At the meeting, a background information packet was provided to the Policy Committee (http://www.its.dot.gov/511/511_materials.pdf), which contained several background papers developed by the Working Group describing topics that might be of interest to Policy Committee members as they deliberate the issues. The paper topics were:

- 511: A Summary of the FCC's Report and Order
- The Other N11s: How Are They Provided?

- Bringing 511 to Market: What do Users Want?
- Wireline Telecommunications Carrier Industry Overview
- Wireless Telecommunications Carrier Industry Overview
- Call Routing and its Implications for 511
- Legislative and Regulatory Issues
- Intellectual Property and Patents
- Computer Telephony Terms and Technologies

The packet also contained a summary of research conducted on existing telephone systems and one-page summaries of regions that have already been identified as early deployers of 511 services:

- Review of Telephone-based Traveler Information Services
- Arizona 511 Case Study Overview
- Kentucky 511 Case Study Overview (*Note: as of April 2, 2001, the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky area was the first to have traveler information accessible via 511. 511 is currently available from all landline phones and two wireless carriers in the region. There is a 90 day transition period during which both 211 and 511 are in effect, and the remaining four wireless carriers will be transitioning to 511 during this period.*)
- Greater Detroit Region 511 Case Study Overview
- Minnesota 511 Case Study Overview
- San Francisco Bay Area 511 Case Study Overview
- Utah 511 Case Study Overview

In mid-March, the issue papers and the background material were compiled into a “Preparatory Materials” packet for the Retreat and provided in advance of the Retreat to Policy Committee and Working Group members (see www.its.dot.gov/511/511.htm). This material could not have been developed to the resulting quality on schedule without the efforts of several members of the Working Group.

Retreat Process

The Retreat spanned one and one-half days. The Retreat agenda and list of participants are located in Tabs A and B, respectively. Working Group members were invited to sit in on the Retreat to hear from the Policy Committee’s discussions firsthand. Except in a few instances, the Working Group did not directly participate in deliberations.

After some initial remarks by the Policy Committee Chair and Vice Chairs, Dr. Christine Johnson, Director of the ITS Joint Program Office of the USDOT provided a presentation on why the USDOT sought 511 and what USDOT’s hopes were for the Policy Committee’s deliberations. Some of her key points and challenges to the Coalition were:

- If implemented as envisioned, 511 can help users cope with an increasingly crowded transportation system.
- This Retreat will determine how 511 develops.

- Will 511 develop into a “brand name” where consumers can develop an expectation of what a 511 service is?
- Will 511 become synonymous for traveler information the way 411 is for general information and 911 is for emergency assistance?
- Will 511 become a service that is commonly available throughout the U.S., or a service available only in a handful of states/regions?
- With constantly changing technology, market dynamics, political environments, and real and perceived consumer demands, we do not have complete information within which we can develop the policy framework for 511 – we must do the best we can.

Steve Kuciemba, Vice President of Technology of ITS America, provided a presentation summarizing information in the public domain regarding what users want from 511. The presentation, provided in Tab C, also acknowledged where gaps in knowledge exist and need to be filled.

The remainder of the first day was spent focusing on the three issues of content, consistency, and cost. Each topic was deliberated between 1.5 and 2 hours. The format for each topic was the same:

- Based on the 511 preparatory materials and personal experience, Jim Wright provided a summary of the issue to be discussed (See Tab D).
- An open discussion using a “conversation circle” technique, where 6-8 chairs are arranged in a circle. Policy Committee members could then take a seat in the circle to provide their input on the issue at hand. As chairs would fill up, the members in the circle could engage in debates and discussions. If one wished to join the debate or share a viewpoint, they would sit in an empty chair in the circle. If the chairs were full, either a chair would be added or a member in the circle would leave the circle and return to his/her seat. The “Circle” was facilitated by Kathy Stein. A specific Policy Committee member was selected to summarize the key points of the discussion. Sixty to seventy five minutes were focused on each topic. In the last few minutes of each discussion, Working Group members were invited to join the circle and share their views with the Policy Committee.
- Following the summary of the Circle by the selected Policy Committee member, Chairman Tinklenberg would conclude the session by leading the Policy Committee through the specific questions asked by the Working Group in the issue papers. Where the consensus answer was not readily evident based upon the Circle discussions, some additional discussion would occur to arrive at the most specific consensus answer possible. (The results are discussed in the next section.)

The morning of the second day (March 30) was used to further solidify the directions the Policy Committee provided to the Working Group and to agree upon the next steps of the Policy Committee (These results are also discussed in the next section.)

Collectively, the subject matter of the Retreat was chosen carefully as to successively build upon the previous discussion. This approach is illustrated in Figure 1.

The afternoon of March 30 and the Morning of March 31, the Working Group met to develop its forward plan to implement the directions of the Policy Committee.

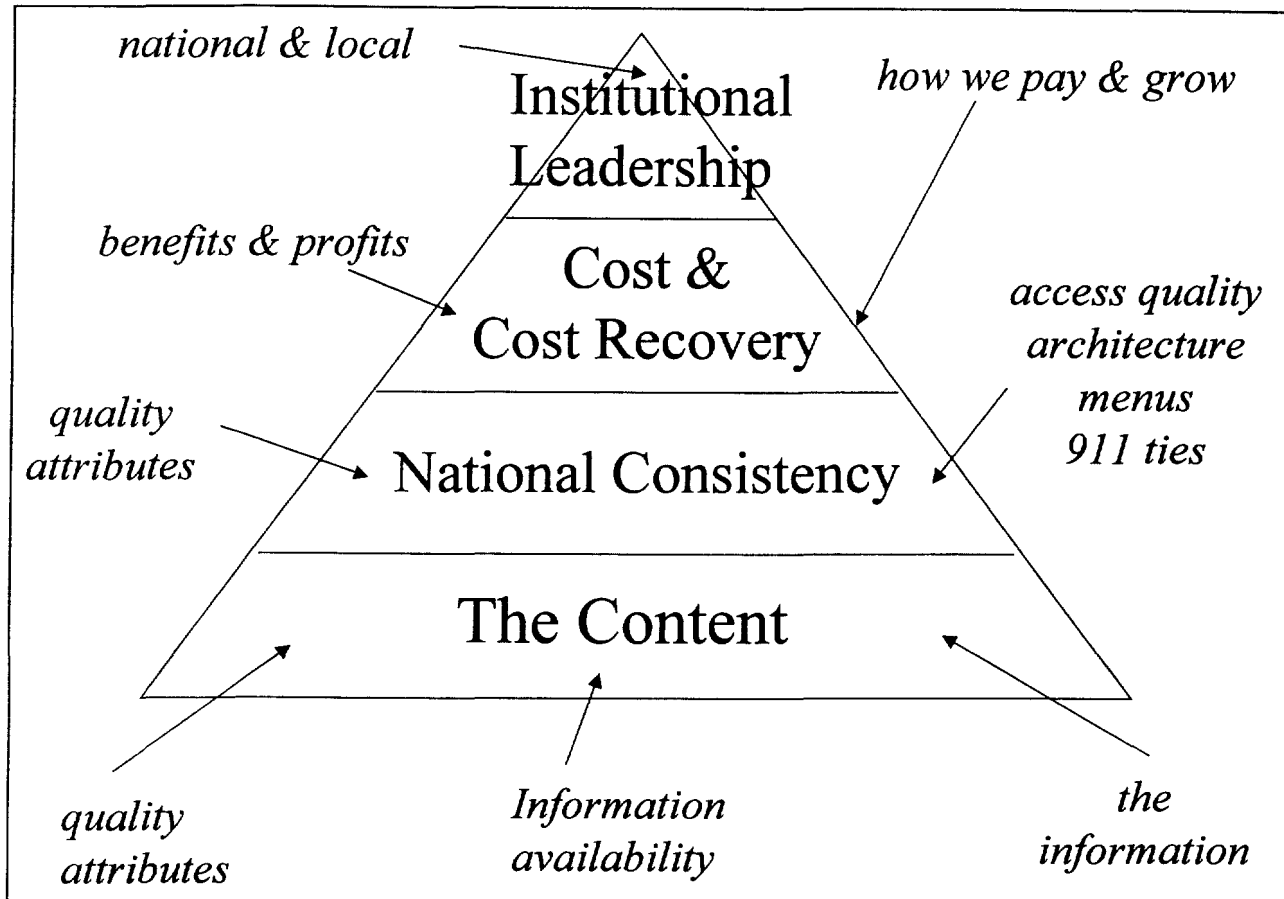


Figure 1 – Layering of Issues Addressed at the Retreat

Retreat Results

The key results of the retreat are summarized below.

Overall

The Policy Committee agreed upon a goal statement for 511 services: “A national traveler information service that is sustainable and provides value to the users.”

Further, two clear underlying philosophical principles emerged during the Retreat:

1. Embrace private sector involvement while ensuring basic service availability.
2. Creative solutions are needed, welcomed, and encouraged.

The Policy Committee recognized that technology is changing rapidly and the vision for 511 needs to evolve along with technology. Accordingly, the Policy Committee encouraged the Working Group to consider both a current “Launch” model and a “Vision” model. This approach is aimed at achieving rapid introduction of services while facilitating evolution to services that over time increase the breadth, depth, and quality of service in the most cost-effective manner possible.

The Policy Committee was keenly aware that 511 could be – and should be – considered a national “brand” by the public and the media in the near future. To provide clarity and minimize confusion, an overall 511 marketing plan/branding strategy was needed as soon as practical.

Lastly, among the items discussed the second morning was the petition to the FCC by a number of wireless companies for reconsideration of recent N11 assignments, including 511. The Policy Committee agreed to send a response to the FCC from the 511 Coalition, describing its efforts to cooperatively identify and address issues related to deploying 511, including those noted in the petition for reconsideration.

Content Issues

There was consensus on the need to establish minimum service guidelines aimed at enabling both the public and private sectors to provide traveler information services and options that consumers want, and which are tailored to meet specific local needs. It was also agreed that these information services will need to grow and evolve along with the advent of new wireless/telecommunications technologies.

The Policy Committee directed the Working Group to draft content guidelines for Policy Committee review. The guidelines should:

- Identify baseline content that should be provided. Traffic, transit, construction and road weather conditions should be the point of departure for deliberations.
- Include quality levels where possible.

- Acknowledge acceptance of “peripheral” content offerings, such as additional local-option public sector content and premium, value-added private sector services. Examples include tourism information and parking information.
- Examine and address as appropriate the possible need to have “tiered” guidelines based on geography (i.e. urban and rural).
- Be based upon current experience in both highway and transit services.
- Balance the desire to maximize service offerings with the underlying baseline cost to provide each service (if the baseline content is too broad, service provision could be cost prohibitive).

The guidelines should take the form of a recommended practice or policy. Each of the sponsoring organizations (AASHTO, APTA, ITS America) should adopt the resulting guidelines, and encourage other organizations to do so as well.

Regarding the substance of the guidelines, a suggestion was made that the services provided in the pending Arizona 511 implementation could serve as a point of departure. Also, transit industry representatives clearly articulated their desire that where available, transit information should be a “top-tier” menu item.

The sense of the Policy Committee was that the guidelines should articulate a clear vision of what 511 services will be and are essential if 511 is to resonate as a “brand” to the general public. The vision should establish a clear differentiation between 511 and other N11 services, such as 311, 411 and 911. Further, the theme of “do a few things, but do them well” was recurrent throughout the Policy Committee’s deliberations.

National Consistency Issues

The Policy Committee adopted a philosophy in the near-term to ***provide flexibility to implementers at this early stage while ensuring that callers will recognize the services as part of a national system.*** In the longer-term, the Policy Committee desires a consistent national service and image, though it was recognized that it will take time for early implementations to evolve to being completely consistent. There was consensus on the need for the “look and feel” of basic 511 services to be the same no matter where a customer accesses the service. However, local-option public sector-oriented and value-added private sector-oriented services may vary in appearance, allowing for competitive business strategies in the marketplace.

The Policy Committee directed the Working Group to draft consistency guidelines for Policy Committee review. A number of topics areas to be considered for inclusion were identified:

➤ System Navigation

This area addresses what is the user interface for phone systems. There are several elements to this topic area, including:

- Menu trees: Should every system have a menu tree? Should there be a standard top-level menu tree? Should the menu tree structure beyond a top-level be consistent (e.g., should systems have a common navigation menu for transit-related information)?